

CONNECT NEW MEXICO COUNCIL MEETING
Hybrid, NM State Capitol Bldg., 411 S. Capitol St.
Santa Fe, NM 87501, Room #311
Thursday, August 17, 2023, 1:30 – 3:30 PM

1. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Video recording time: 00:00:04

The meeting of the Connect New Mexico Council was called to order by Renee Narvaiz, at 1:35 pm, on Thursday, August 17, 2023, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Ms. Narvaiz introduced herself as well as Shawna Rosales, a new staff member in the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion. Ms. Narvaiz then reviewed general rules and procedures regarding the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT-

Kimball Sekaquaptewa, Chair	Leonard Manzanares
Luis Reyes, Co-Chair	Eli Guinee
Secretary Peter Mantos	Tico Charlee
Ovidiu Viorica	Launa Waller
Jim Ruybal	Steve Grey
Godfrey Enjady	Joseph Navarette
Katherine Crociata	

MEMBERS ABSENT-

Bogi Malecki	Nora Sackett for Alex Greenberg
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OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Narvaiz, IT, Public Information Manager
Natalie Runyan, GIS
Joanne Hovis (CTC), Alison Riley (OB AE), Shawna Rosales (OB AE), Nathan Cogburn, Vanessa Willock (General Counsel), Jennifer Nevarez, Jerry Smith, Michael Lord, Paul Muraca, Heather Floyd, Kate Sneed, Sandeep Taxali, Kitty Clemens, Scott Sponseller, Teresa Hopkins (Sacred Wind), Rafael Laumbach, Jason Gonzales, Stephanie Osborn, Mike Moffett, Matejka Santillanes, Johnny Montoya, Mitch Hibbard (PVT), Jay Santillanes, Marcus Krohn, Carlos Herrera, Jerrold, Marco, Asion, Minion 2023, 512-965-6278, Jacqueline Lovato, Jen Somers, Stephanie Osburn

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES

Video recording time: 00:02:31

MOTION A motion was made by Mr. Viorica and seconded by Mr. Ruybal to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE No opposition, motion passed.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Viorica to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2023 meeting and seconded by Mr. Grey.

VOTE No opposition, motion passed.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ms. Waller to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2023 special meeting and seconded by Mr. Viorica.

VOTE No opposition, motion passed.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Grey to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2023 special meeting and seconded by Mr. Navarrete.

VOTE No opposition, motion passed.

3. CHAIR UPDATES/COMMENTS - Kimball Sekaquaptewa

Video recording time: 00:04:51

Ms. Sekaquaptewa welcomed everyone to the meeting. Thanked everyone for their time commitment to these meetings and contributions to the broadband endeavor as a whole. Continuing to learn how this Council fits into the greater evolution of the State Broadband Office. Everyone's voice is needed. Expressed appreciation for all the efforts so far. Sees the need for formalization, but item did not make it on today's Agenda. Noted that Mr. Viorica had hired a consultant to help organize their operations. Exploring how to engage this individual to determine how the working group efforts are tied to the daily operations of OBAE and how those also influence the plans being written. Will come back at another meeting with information for members to review. May be a need for working groups to submit written reports to OBAE and need to determine to whom reports should be submitted, especially with respect to the report to NTIA for BEAD. Thinking organizationally, open to ideas so work from the Council and working groups is tied into OBAE's efforts at an operational level.

4. Working Groups-

Video recording time: 00:08:58

Updates –

a. Tribal Working Group – Kimball Sekaquaptewa for Godfrey Enjady

Tribal Connectivity Program has come out with NOFO #2, which is \$960 million, which is the last of the federal appropriations, due at the end of the year and a lot of work is going on. Thanked OBAE staff for technical assistance to talk to the tribes and hear their ideas to try to build projects. Noted that Mr. Enjady is also the chair of the National Tribal Telecommunications Association, which is comprised of the 13 tribal ETCs nationally, and has been hosting the tribal networking conference which NTIA will attend, along with other programs, which will be at the end of August.

At working group level have been talking educationally. Becoming aware of technologies that can be deployed and understanding these.

Group continues to meet bi-weekly, about 18 involved at last meeting.

Two policy issues or opportunities: FCC has asked for comments on both of the USF programs as well as the spectrum over tribal lands. These are important areas of advocacy. Hopefully can get whitepaper/talking points composed for tribal governments to consider.

Viorica – Huge opportunity for New Mexico. Has always been difficult as New Mexico encompasses 23 pueblos and tribes. Very complex due to locations, sovereign status of tribes/pueblos, etc. This specific federal funding source will now provide this opportunity as it is dedicated to tribal entities. New Mexico should not be content with less than 100% funding, submissions for funding and actually successful funding from NTIA for all of the tribes and pueblos and to see that the problem is solved once and for all. Council needs to provide whatever support/assistance is needed so every tribe and pueblo will have a very solid, very strong application that meets all the requirements by the end of the year. This would be a significant step forward. Voiced challenge to the Council and OBAE, as well as the tribes and pueblos, to be aggressive and pursue these funding opportunities to the fullest extent possible.

Kimball – Agrees completely. OBAE continuing to staff up. This won't be solved by a team of one. Great tribal engagement ongoing as well as technical assistance for grant writing, post grant compliance, etc. Also, FCC mapping will need continuous updates.

Asked Mr. Enjady if he had anything to add.

Enjady – Working lately on immersing tribal working group people into the different technologies and how they work, such as middle mile, wireline, fiber to house, etc., and how these apply to different areas. Subject of partnerships has been coming up with groups such as WTA and NTCA; how do providers, neighbors, etc., who have the expertise, provide some type of partnership with tribes, are there groups or individuals who can do this. How should these partnerships be arranged to provide these kinds of services? Would this just be for the start-up or would this be long-term? Exploring these questions to see how far a provider is willing to work with tribes. Not enough people willing to work with tribes. Noted any problems with mapping need to be challenged at the FCC level. Second round of TBCP addressing overlap conditions, how to get through this, tribes need to know how to challenge the broadband maps. Currently a six month window on this. TBCP grant program does not close until January, not much time, needs to be worked out.

Kimball – Asked how much was brought in with TBCP round one. \$150 million?

Viorica – Does not have exact amount but over \$100 million.

With respect to overlap, have received confirmation that NTIA is recognizing the language in the BEAD NOFO, that language states that unless there are legally binding agreements, including a tribal government resolution, prior funding commitments, such as RDOF, will not be considered as applicable. In his opinion will tremendously simplify the process of de-conflicting overlaps occurring everywhere because of the way different sources of funding and different programs have been applied.

Kimball – Excellent! This is significant. This answers a big question on what to do in these cases.

Jerrold – Deadline for TBCP is January 23rd.

Kimball – Blessing to have this additional time. Tribes and pueblos shut down during much of December. Really do need to get going on this.

b. Grant Working Group/Rulemaking - Kimball Sekaquaptewa

Recognized Ms. Willock's work in this group. Have been working on language for the Tribal/State Collaboration Act, which was the focus of the last working group meeting. Will probably bring back to the Council at next meeting. Will let Ms. Willock round this out. Starting to look at legislative requests for next session, had been paused due to cancelled meetings. Initial request for information was satisfied. Have a couple more months to finalize and will be returning to this soon.

Willock – OBAE putting final touches on draft legislation that will be circulated to the Rulemaking Group within the next week. This is very rough draft but content is there.

Kimball – Some discretion on eligible uses of the \$70 million award. Can examine best use of this funding to fill gaps after seeing what the BEAD and TBCP limitations will be. Asked working group members to think on this. Have not gotten into the NOFO portion of this with respect to rulemaking yet, but will need to have some of the criteria defined for the application. Asked Ms. Willock to consider this. May need to look at right-of-way issues, tribal or private landowner, permitting and easement processes.

c. Mapping Data & Evaluation Working Group – Peter Mantos/Natalie Runyan

Have had two meetings since the last Council meeting. There is one new Advisory member and there are 11 new Advisory members pending, who signed up on the Connect NM.gov website. She and Mr. Mantos were absent for one meeting but the meeting proceeded with informal conversation about getting employers together and also the value of both the FCC providers reported claims as well as data coming in from individual users. Noting the importance of whether the data is reflecting what is really happening. Has a long list of updates recently obtained from OBAE. There is a new public mapping hub, put link in chat; maps.connect.nm.gov, which combines existing map resources in one place but also adds a couple of new ones. Gave details related to the site and reviewed use of the map. There is a contact function on the site to submit ideas, complaints, corrections, etc. OBAE initiated a secure data consortium concept in the web mapping environment and gave details of this.

Actively designing the state-based challenge process for BEAD which happens prior to the NOFO for the BEAD grant. Challenge process will go out for comment this Fall. OBAE will report at the September Council meeting the exact date for that public comment. Expects the state-based challenge process to happen at the beginning of 2024.

She did note from this meeting that tribes need to know how to challenge the broadband map successfully related to overbuilds and that RDOF and potentially others may not be considered an overbuild. Working group will research this further.

Kimball – Even with many new members pending, if there is additional interest, there is still need for members due to the scope of the work.

Asked Ms. Runyan if she had any insights or ideas on what needs to be done to further refine the mapping.

Runyan – Data team staff are on hold right now due to contracting issues but they have been performing an audit of the existing grant award locations, making sure these are related specifically in order to identify points before submission of the Initial Proposal, Vol. 1. NTIA has to be notified exactly what has already been vended, by what, by how much, what speed, what technology will be implemented, etc.

Kimball – Continue to fight the good fight.

Runyan – Limited information about the grant on the mapping. Really want to see spatially where things are and what technology is available, what is already going on in an area.

Mantos – Nothing additional to add. Additional members a good thing, better participation. Visitors welcome, but do not have to have a lot of voting members.

Kimball – Will work on details of how to allow new members in the working groups and thoughts on this later in today's meeting. Thanked Mr. Mantos for making the effort to attend today as he is traveling.

d. Digital Equity & Inclusion Working Group – Eli Guinnee

Continue to meet every other week online. Will also meet next Thursday online. Anyone interested in joining this group they post all announcements through the list of members who sign up on the OBAE website. If anyone used to get announcements and are no longer receiving those please be sure to sign up through the OBAE website. Very inclusive group, open discussion, new members every week; usually asks what they do, what their concerns

are, where they see opportunities. Last meeting was about NMSU Cooperative Extension Services with a representative sharing about what they are doing in the digital equity realm and financial literacy realm. Telehealth continues to be a hot topic. Some aspects of this are not digital, of course, but there is a heavy digital equity aspect to telehealth so continuing to investigate what partnerships might look like in the future to improve access and what pieces would fall under digital equity. Meetings used by OBAE, through Jennifer Case-Nevarez, to answer questions and give reminders as to the timeline and upcoming deadlines. Will have an in-person meeting on September 14th, their first in-person meeting; will be releasing more information about that when plans are better finalized. This meeting will be to establish priority areas. Hoping to also schedule in-person meetings in Albuquerque and at NMSU and join all three meetings in a hybrid/Zoom situation.

Asked Ms. Nevarez if she had anything to add.

Nevarez – Has a news flash – as of yesterday the State Digital Equity Plan, initially required for submission to NTIA on November 30th, has been moved to February 11th. Document will now go to public comment after November 30th. Draft is still due November 28th. Will be working with working group and other stakeholders to flesh out components of this and ensure that the draft is submitted on time. Will have a lot of time for comment before submission February 11th.

Guinee – State Library adding to their digital equity staff, hiring a digital program equity manager, just finished interviews. Hope to have someone on board by October to focus on working with the digital equity working group and with libraries around the state.

Kimball – Great news on the submission deadline changes as well as changes at the State Library. Any other questions.

Runyan – Hoping this new person at State Library might do the inventory to find out what the actual service status is at all libraries. Is this possible?

Guinee – Would like to discuss this offline. Has a lot of information already. Would like to see what information they have available now and then can certainly fill in any gaps.

Runyan – Thanked Mr. Guinee.

Kimball – Asked Ms. Hovis if the work of this group has been incorporated to her satisfaction in the Plan draft, or does this need additional focus in the near future.

Hovis – State Digital Equity Plan has incorporated the insights provided through the outreach and materials received from the working group. Also includes some quantitative analysis. Did note that due to the additional time allowed the Statewide Digital Equity Plan required by NTIA will have quite a bit of additional quantitative data, including the results of the statewide phone survey. Yes, she believes the State Plan has incorporated insights from all of the outreach and the ongoing efforts and the Statewide Plan, which will build on the State Plan, because of the additional time to prepare it, will have considerably more quantitative data and more in-depth goal setting and initiative development, which is a multiphase process based on time.

Kimball – Does Ms. Hovis have anything else to add regarding progress of the Digital Equity Plan.

Hovis – Data analytics currently underway, being done on a regional basis statewide and on

the county level wherever there is a sufficiently large sample size to make statistically significant conclusions at the county level. Trying to work as broadly as possible, on a quantitative basis, also to allow at the regional and county levels for comparison to statewide and national averages. Because they are also developing profiles at the county level of broadband and digital equity metrics for all counties these two things are happening contemporaneously and informing each other to make use of the data as widely as possible. Because of HSR approvals from the federal government the approval needed in order to do the phone survey took a long time, so this could not be collected in time for the State Digital Equity Plan, so this data will be in the subsequent Statewide Digital Equity Plan which Ms. Nevarez shared about earlier, which is now due in February.

Kimball – Anything to do on the local level to help or anything this Council can do? Want to know how to support this part of the work.

Hovis – Appreciates this. Council and statewide stakeholders, local governments, tribal governments, etc., have already been enormously helpful, have shared a lot of insights, priorities, data, experiences, a lot of really useful help. If there is anything else she will come back to the Council with requests formally. Will defer to OBAE on the interview and consultation schedule as she is just a consultant. Again expressed appreciation for all the help received so far.

Kimball – Questions or comments on Digital Equity Planning?

Crociata – On behalf of the counties commended everyone who has been working on this. Outreach has been incredible. Noted the inclusive nature of this outreach and working with local governments and this is very much appreciated by them. Wanted to express her thanks, this has been really impressive.

Kimball – Great feedback. On the tribal as well, there has been an amazing amount of effort and will address this in a later update.

Nevarez – Has been a bit of confusion with respect to terms. There was a report officially mandated in legislation, called the Broadband Knowledge and Digital Equity Analysis and Plan, officially the State of New Mexico Report on Broadband Knowledge and Digital Equity Analysis and Plan. This report was submitted, but it is not the State Digital Equity Plan, it is a report on the progress. As Ms. Hovis mentioned, that process is underway. Noted the Spring Sprint, Broadband Day at the Legislature, regional meetings, boot camps, listening sessions, ISP one-on-one meetings, tribal one-on-one meetings, tons of outreach, as well as the phone survey and focus groups and interviews, some of which is still ongoing and will continue.

The Statewide Digital Equity Plan is actually what NTIA calls the document due February 11th, and the State Digital Equity Plan is actually what is coming, which is where the robust input analysis, ideas, metrics and objectives will flesh out. Just wanted to clarify. This is a work in progress. References being made to the summer report which is actually the BKDEAP, State of New Mexico Report on Broadband Knowledge and Digital Equity Analysis and Plan.

Kimball – Additional comments? None.

e. Permits, ROW & Pole Attachments Working Group (PROP) – Ovidiu Viorica
Group continues to have very good participation in this working group. Did not meet last week as Mr. Viorica was attending the Mountain Connect Conference in Denver, participating in a panel for PROP related issues, attending for Director Schlegel who was unable to be there.

Commended New Mexico women broadband leaders who participated in a panel on public/private partnerships, which included Ms. Sekaquaptewa, Melanie Goodman, Denise Barrera from Sierra County Electric Coop and Misty Willock from Comnet Broadband and Comnet Ecos Second Wind. Commented that this showcased how much New Mexico has to offer, has done a lot of work and has a lot of leaders, particularly women leaders, in this space.

Has become evident that this is a significant issue nationwide that needs to be addressed. All states have different landscapes and different situations related to the mix of jurisdictions involving permits, rights-of-way and pole attachments. These all have cost, time and resource implications for all projects. These issues can stop projects and make New Mexico less competitive as states receive points toward competitive grants related to the speed with which projects can be deployed. Noted that permit process can take anywhere between 18-24 months alone. Working group has been discussing several policy recommendations as well as researching other ideas. They hope to be bringing policy recommendations to this Council soon regarding what the State can do to streamline these processes. Working group is lacking specialized support in the areas of research and analysis in this very complex scenario. Commended participants from some of the rural electric cooperatives, local/rural ISPs, other associations, several state agencies, etc., who are committed to finding some solutions to put New Mexico in a good position to get this work done.

Kimball – Yes, a lot of work to be done. Cannot emphasize how important this is. This topic is at the forefront of discussions at meetings and conferences; how to make these processes more efficient.

NMDOT is creating a new portal for transparency. Word is that this portal is close to being released and there may be an opportunity to screen it in advance to give feedback. Has the PROPs working group been in touch with NMDOT or considered previewing this portal?

Viorica – Yes, in close coordination with the NMDOT team developing the portal. Beta version of the E-permit system has been in testing mode for a number of months, internal within the DOT. Understands there are now some outside users being brought in to test the system. Being told there are updates and upgrades that need to occur. Understanding of the overall timeline is that the public release and full deployment of this system is approximately 6-12 months out. Voiced possibility that Mr. Manzanares would have additional information regarding this.

Kimball – Asked if Mr. Manzanares had anything to add. No response.

So this is forthcoming. Expressed anticipation for seeing this implemented. Will be a very helpful tool. Expressed appreciation for the work of NMDOT and programmers involved.

f. Regional Planning & Community Engagement Working Group – Jerry Smith

Mr. Smith noted that he was also able to attend the Mountain Connect Conference which Mr. Viorica has already reported on. Was great to see how well New Mexico was represented.

Announced and promoted the New Mexico Municipal League Annual Conference in two weeks, to be held in Farmington. Confirmed yesterday that a representative from NM OBAE will be attending. Very good opportunity to engage stakeholders and keep them current on the broadband improvement initiatives as heard here. Individual followup opportunities often result from presentations at these types of meeting.

The working group met yesterday, welcoming several new members, with several more to

come at the next meeting in two weeks. Attendees included Richard Govea and Jose Bettencourt, two new project managers at OBAE. Pleased to hear that OBAE is adding project managers who are being assigned to regions around the state, as well as a new web page on the OBAE website listing which counties and communities are included in the regional assignments, a very important part of the strategy for outreach required by BEAD.

Two points of interest noted at yesterday's meeting, one being the need for broadband in Placitas, noted by a new member from that area, and secondly urgent statewide connectivity needs, pointed out by a new healthcare representative member. One follow up meeting resulted from this discussion.

Kimball – Noted that Albuquerque Public Schools got Placitas Elementary connected which was a challenge due to Forest Service land involved. Would be great if some of that fiber could be used to connect the other schools and library.

Asked if broadband is presenting at the Municipal League meeting in Farmington or if OBAE will have a table.

Smith – Not aware of the specifics. Wondered if anyone else in the meeting would know about this. Believes Alex Trujillo is the representative attending. Not sure if there is an opportunity to present as agenda was already set, but believes they would be able to have a table.

Kimball – Good opportunity. Will make a note of that. Any further questions? None. Lots of good work ongoing.

***Discuss process to allow new members in working groups**

Kimball – If current process is working in the interim there is no need to make changes at this time. Status quo is that anyone who asks to join a working group is added to the mailing list to receive the information and participate, but they are not a voting member. If this is working for everyone at the working group level this can be left as is.

Will have some other structural issues regarding the Council. Some members are terming out at the end of the summer, including herself, but clarification came from the Governor's office that this was not the case. There may still be some changes upcoming at the Council level. Need to clarify consistency in the number of voting members in working groups. All of this will need to be revisited formally and documented for submission to OBAE.

Are there any concerns with the status quo of the working groups, that being that volunteers are added and welcome but are not voting members at this time. No opposition voiced. Will reflect on this at a later time.

5. Rulemaking Update – Vanessa Willock, Tribal/State Collaboration Act amendment

Video Recording time: 01:03:02

Kimball – May have been covered by her earlier in the meeting but asked Ms. Willock to comment.

Willock – Kimball did cover what is happening currently. Getting good participation. Did have to cancel two meetings but legislative information will start circulating and this group will get busier as they consider this and examine the language, etc.

6. Updates from OBAE – Kelly Schlegel

Video Recording time: 01:03:40

a. Comments from the BKDEAP Report
Covered under item 4-d above.

b. 5-Year Plan progress – Joanne Hovis

Screen shared and reviewed CTC Update on BEAD timeline, the 5-Year Plan progress and Initial Proposal requirements, which is posted on DoIT website under heading for today's meeting. Modeling underway currently to support Volume 2 of the Initial Proposal and build grant strategy to optimize use of the funding. Detailed modeling has just begun because NTIA just this week provided to the states the locations that are high cost, which was how NTIA determined how much funding each state received. These are very important for the grant strategy as these high cost locations do not require the 25% match under the NTIA rules. Modeling designed to make projections for data development to understand what process will be necessary to fund the extremely high cost per location threshold, which will be different than the high cost locations. State will get to do the analysis of the extremely high cost per location threshold based on bids obtained to determine what the dollar figure will be at which it is just too expensive to fund fiber, which is the federal preference. Fiber must be funded as much as possible but at some point there will be a dollar figure where it is just too expensive to fund fiber in order to get some kind of service to all locations. At that point the state can use alternative technologies so the modeling is designed to help understand this as well.

Kimball – Will high cost location data be released to view on the state map? Will this layer be enabled to see which areas this applies to? Will the cost per underserved location be available relative to high cost, etc.? Will this information be available to applicants to consider in their planning?

Runyan – Programs do not currently have the numbers assigned to any one location but do have census block group levels. Put link in chat for the service availability status map.

Kimball – When NTIA sends this data are they sending a GIS file that can be imported and used?

Runyan – They did but was after the fact. Asked if Kimball was inquiring about is a file to be used separately.

Kimball – Would like to see high cost data for particular communities.

Runyan – Asked if Ms. Hovis was finished with her screen-share.

Hovis – Yes, she is finished.

Runyan - Screen-shared mapping hub and reviewed functions of this.

Kimball – Noted question in chat about high-cost area, if it is in the green area.

Runyan – Reviewed legend on the map and gave further details of use and different layers.

Kimball – Question in chat from Mitch Hibbard: Does service availability map include funded areas as served or unserved?

Runyan – Does not account for already funded locations.

Kimball – Training on use of this map would be useful. Ms. Runyan may or may not have time,

but would be great to learn how to use this tool better, if possible.

Asked if Ms. Hovis had completed her presentation.

Has a question about the extremely high cost threshold. Is asset mapping and further data collection needed for this? If so, how is this progressing?

Hovis – Digital Equity Plan, Initial Proposal and 5-Year Action Plan require an asset inventory, but NTIA does not mean a physical asset inventory in this respect. Really means people, programs and plans, which consists of a discussion and list of the plans that have been developed on the local basis; tribes, localities, communities, non-profits, etc., programs that already exist and different kinds of partners engaged in those programs. BEAD does not anticipate the state providing an inventory of physical assets or a map of physical assets and gave reasons for this.

Kimball – Thanked Ms. Hovis for her explanation. Looking to get down to the analysis of what is needed, what the detailed cost analysis is for the 5-Year Plan, etc.

Hovis – 5-Year Plan as the overall cost to get to universal service where an engineering assessment was done of what the cost would be to build fiber to all the unserved and the underserved locations in New Mexico, which is a big number. She will be sharing that analysis soon. Initial Proposal modeling being done now is based on the better data available in the map and described how that will hypothetically illustrate where the limits of fiber will be and gave further details regarding extremely high-cost locations, etc.

Viorica – Expressed concern about timeframe. Looking at 3½ months to have a solid draft and gave details of process. Concerned about many layers, the Council's ability to manage this as a group, the ability of the industry as a whole to develop the full regimen of projects to cover the entire state in timeframe that appears to be approximately 18 months. Many stumbling blocks.

Hovis – Agrees with Mr. Viorica. Currently at State Broadband Leaders Network Conference in Indianapolis with Director Schlegel, and NTIA began sharing yesterday the toolkit they have developed for development of Volume 2 of the Initial Proposal, which is not yet functional, but they are just beginning to share data, for example, they presented the availability of certain kinds of cost data they have purchased on behalf of the states. All of the states are in the same place. In many ways rules are just emerging now. NTIA is saying they hope to approve all of the Initial Proposals by the end of March 2024, which will trigger the 12-month clock in terms of submission of the Final Proposal. Will be a very tight timeline which includes running the challenge process and very complex, sophisticated broadband grant programs, which applies to every state.

Viorica – Thanked Ms. Hovis for her comments. Noted stumbling blocks such as development of the grant program, the challenge process of 120 days within the 12 month timeline, state analysis of these challenges and make decisions/adjudications related to these challenges and then award the projects, which will include letters of credit, estimates for pole attachments, permits, rights-of-way in addition to the bidding period previously mentioned. Would like to see the analysis and modeling sooner than later. Understands need to account for high-cost areas, but this truly does not change the cost of fiber versus wireless versus other technologies. Would like to make as much progress and preparation as possible now understanding the resources at hand.

Mantos – Noted he believed Mr. Viorica was in charge of the meeting at this point.

Viorica – Returned the chair back to Kimball. Thanked Mr. Mantos.

Kimball – Recognized Mr. Mantos.

Mantos – Question about grants reflecting the unserved and underserved. Short answer is, No. Reason is just because someone has a grant and the assumption is an area will be covered, the criteria is can they provide this in 10 days. The answer of course is, No. Until that happens this area remains unserved and underserved.

With respect to high-cost and extremely high-cost areas put a link in chat to an editorial in the Albuquerque Journal which basically states; “Why is \$2.6 million being spent to get broadband to 28 people? This is neither cost efficient nor forward thinking”, which is a quote from the article. His point is the discussion does not need to be about the cost of getting access to each broadband service location, but needs to be about the average cost, the total cost of getting broadband to all New Mexicans, which has been the goal, secure broadband to everyone where they can use it with digital equity. When these issues arise there needs to be acknowledgement that servicing some locations will have a high cost. Is it worth it? What is it worth to say that the entire state has broadband access? That should be the question. Not the question of what it costs to service a single location.

Kimball – Thanked Mr. Mantos for his comment. How to approach this analysis and the different outcomes based on the decision of the methodology selected? Valid questions. Certainly want to connect. What is the value of each home? How much is too much? What is the value of each community? So many tradeoffs in the equation. Hopes to have open and frank conversations in order to do the best for everyone.

Any further comments or questions for Ms. Hovis? Expressed hope that data being collected will help make the best informed plan. A complicated puzzle.

Thanked Ms. Hovis for her report and participation. Asked her to please let the Council know if they can assist her in any way.

Hovis – Thanked Kimball. Appreciates all the input from the Council thus far, it has been enormously helpful. Noted that data does not answer all questions and sometimes is wrong. A model is only a model, but goal has been to design something that will provide information so policy makers can understand potential implications as they make their decisions. Expressed her thanks again for the opportunity to speak to the Council and for their input and guidance.

c. State Digital Equity Plan Progress
Covered under 4-d above.

d. NTIA Digital Equity Plan Progress
Covered under 4-d above.

e. Initial Proposal
Covered under 6-b above.

f. Tribal Consultations
Covered under 4-a above.

g. OBAE Newsletter – Alison Riley

Screen-shared the newsletter and reviewed this. Currently being sent out once a month but next year may go to twice per month as projects ramp up. If not currently receiving the newsletter please put email in chat and she will also put a link in the chat for sign-up.

Kimball – Lots of good content, very helpful. Complimented the office for their work on marketing pieces, pop-ups at events, branding, logo, etc. Mentioned possibility of integration with tribal newsletter. Any questions for Ms. Riley.

Ovidiu – Encouraged anyone involved in broadband effort to notify Ms. Riley about upcoming events. Encouraged events in general and efforts to publicize them. This newsletter is a good opportunity to do so.

Kimball – Call to action. Did anyone take pictures at Mountain Connect Conference? Thanked Mr. Viorica and Mr. Smith for mentioning this. Take pictures at events such as the upcoming one in Farmington. Capture the narrative, share information.

h. Job Openings

Asked Ms. Nevarez to put link in the chat regarding these.

i. CTC Update – Modeling Update

Covered under 6-b above.

7. Public Comment – Kimball Sekaquaptewa

Video recording time: 01:46:52

Narvaiz – New Mexico Tech Summit occurring on September 7th and 8th. Kimball will be speaking on a panel and members of OBAE will be hosting a talk on Broadband Strategies and Solutions. There will be a link on DoIT website to get tickets.

Kimball – Add this as Agenda point for next meeting to share information from the Summit. New Mexico Tech Council is a long-standing organization of New Mexico IT companies. Building New Mexico IT companies, helping those already here as well as new ones, is certainly a big piece of the broadband puzzle. Encouraged others to attend.

8. Adjournment:

Video recording time: 01:48:55

Motion for adjournment: Motion was made by Ms. Waller to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Crociata

No opposition, meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.